

VOLUME 23

NUMBER 2

STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE BULLETIN

ALUMNI NUMBER



HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI
OCTOBER, 1935

Published Quarterly by the State Teachers College, Hattiesburg,
Mississippi. Accepted for mailing at special rate of
postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of Octo-
ber 3, 1927, authorized February 19, 1919.

FOOTBALL SCHEDULE—1935

At Home

October 5—S. T. C. 12; Louisiana College 0.
October 12—S. T. C. 13; Troy Teachers 14.
October 18—S. T. C. 26; Louisiana Normal 12.
November 15 (Night)—S. T. C. vs. Mississippi State.
(Home Coming Game)
December 7—S. T. C. vs. Union University.

Away

October 26—S. T. C. 12; Memphis Teachers 0.
November 1—S. T. C. vs. Springhill College.
November 8—S. T. C. vs. Louisiana Southwestern.
November 28—S. T. C. vs. Louisiana Tech.

STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi was the last state in the Union to acknowledge the importance of the teaching profession by establishing an institution for the specific purpose of training teachers. This fact does not mean that before the Mississippi Normal College, as it was then called, opened its doors in 1912 there was no professional training in the state. Such training, however, was meager. Only the University and M. S. C. W. had departments of education and only the latter institution attempted practice teaching. Most colleges of the state considered pedagogy, as it was then called, a trifling fad beneath the dignity of a self-respecting college. All one needed, they argued, was a knowledge of subject matter. So they continued to turn out graduates who must learn the art of teaching in the school of experience. The Mississippi Education Association, then known as the State Teachers Association, took the lead in the agitation for an institution that would be devoted solely to training teachers. Such an institution was established by an act of the legislature in 1910, but it was not until 1912 that an appropriation was made for its support and maintenance.

A great help in the establishment of the Mississippi Normal College, now known as State Teachers College, was the dissatisfaction of rural legislators with the training of rural teachers. Graduates of the state-supported institutions and of the denominational colleges were absorbed by the town and city high schools. Indeed, according to a statement made to the writer by the late Dr. Fant, for many years head of the department of education of the University of Mississippi and by virtue of that fact, supervisor of the high schools of the state, there were far too few college graduates in the state to supply the high schools. Less than two percent of rural teachers in 1912 were college graduates and only twenty percent had any college training whatever. The majority of rural teachers were not even high school graduates. They were people who had finished the eighth grade, and by virtue of superior mental ability or by the grace of the county superintendent made the grade for second or third grade teachers' license. To get the complete picture you must realize, of course, that there was at that time no single rural high school. High schools were especially scarce in the southern part of the state where towns were not so old or so numerous as in the northern part of the state.

Of course, there were the county normals and summer institutes which gave some attention to methods in the elementary grades, but which in the main devoted themselves to the arduous task of preparing in two or three weeks, these products of rural schools for the county teachers' examinations. Teachers were scarce in those days, and the

examiners could not be too strict in their grading of applicants' papers. The writer has known personally many of these rural teachers who obtained license by cheating on the examination. These teachers were not to be blamed unduly, for they were the victims of a lack of opportunity. Most of them did the best they could in the school room, but their best could not be very good.

Under the law creating the Mississippi Normal College two courses were offered, one a two-year course leading to a five-year certificate and the other a professional course leading to a diploma, which entitled the holder to professional license for life. The first faculty, realizing that the Normal College must train teachers for the rural schools, made graduation from the eighth grade of the public school the entrance requirement. To have done otherwise would have been to defeat the primary purpose, so far as the legislators were concerned, of the establishment of the college. To have done otherwise would also have deprived that great body of men and women who had been teaching, but who had no high school training, of the opportunity of an education which they had been denied in their youth. Many people, misunderstanding the function of the college in those early days, and failing to see that it was created to meet a definite need and not just to be another state college, were critical of what they considered the lack of college standards and college atmosphere. They felt the college should at once become a copy of the University or of other colleges of the state.

The proof that the Mississippi Normal College met a definite need and met it well is to be found in the rapid growth of the institution in those early days. The enrollment grew from 876 in 1912-13 to 1334 in 1915-16. Still greater proof is in the rapid development of the rural schools of Mississippi since 1912. That year the first consolidated school was established in Harrison county. The present situation with reference to the development of rural consolidated high schools is too well known to need emphasis. Of course, other factors and other institutions have helped in this development, but it can be confidently asserted that the State Teachers College has been the largest single factor in the phenomenal development of Mississippi's rural schools.

As the public schools grew, the college has grown also. It is no longer a normal school but a standard four-year college, giving professional training based upon a thorough academic background. Now the majority of public school teachers are college graduates. The greatest need today is for emphasis on the professional training of teachers. The idea is still all too prevalent that anybody can teach. With its history and its tradition State Teachers College now faces the duty of meeting more fully that second purpose for which it was created, the dignifying and improvement of teaching as a profession. State Teachers College is already well on the way to round out the fullness of its destiny, the purpose in the minds of the educational leaders who fought for the establishment of a state institution for the professional and academic training of teachers.

ALMA HICKMAN,

Associate-professor of English, State Teachers College,
Vice-president, Mississippi Education Association.

NEW ADVISORY SYSTEM INSTITUTED AT STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

The advisory system inaugurated at State Teachers College, Hattiesburg, at the beginning of the present school session is meeting with favorable reaction on the part of both students and faculty members.

The new scheme was devised with the aim of affording to each student an abundant opportunity for thorough, highly individualized educational and personal guidance.

Twelve faculty members have been designated as advisers for students in the Junior College Division. Each adviser is responsible for the guidance of about twenty students assigned to him by the Director of the Junior College Division. The adviser holds periodic conferences with each student committed to his supervision. At this conference such problems as choice of a major, program of studies, extra-curricular activities, health, study conditions, study habits, worry, scholarship, campus friendships, and vocational aptitudes may be discussed. After the conference has ended, the adviser files for further reference, a report giving the date of the conference, the name of the student, the problems discussed, and the instructor's comment and recommendations. Students are encouraged to consult their advisers at any time that they feel the need of guidance on any problem which may present itself.

Students in the Senior College Division are advised by the heads of the departments in which they are taking their majors. The same general system of guidance as that used on the Junior College level is followed in the Senior College.

Advisory activities in both Divisions are greatly facilitated by a personnel record card devised and recently introduced into use at State Teachers College. This card provides for an unusually complete record of the students activities and interests. In addition to such items as date of birth, parents' name, address, and occupation, previous educational record, etc., the personnel blank calls for a specific statement of vocational pursuits, extra-curricular activities for each year, health record for each year, social interests, academic interests and financial assistance; space is also provided for the listing of interviews with advisers and the action taken in each case.

Guidance functions at State Teachers College are not limited to department heads and special advisers. All teachers are required to keep office hours during certain periods for the primary purpose of consulting students in regard to their academic, extra-curricular, and other activities. Every five weeks instructors are asked to turn in reports on blanks provided by the Dean concerning students who are making a grade of "D" and below. This blank presupposes a conference between teacher and student, calls for an opinion as to the reasons for the latter's poor work, and asks for a statement of the results of the conference.

B. I. WILEY,

Professor of History.

PLACEMENT SERVICE

According to a report from Professor S. Truman Lewis, of the State Teachers College Alumni Placement Service, dated October 12, the Placement Service definitely secured positions for 156 people who registered with it during the session of 1934-35. Twenty others had failed to report and it was not known whether they had secured positions.

Total registrations were 176, distributed as follows: Graduates of 1934-35 registering 92, placed 88, not reporting 4.

Post-graduates registering 53, placed 49, not reporting 4. Under graduates registering 31, placed 19, not reporting 12.

In some departments the number of calls for teachers far exceeded the available supply. Those departments in which the excess of demand over supply was greatest were Home Economics, Public School Music, Athletic Coaches, Science and Mathematics. The number of calls for degree holding teachers who had majored in the lower elementary field was also far beyond the supply.

Because of the increasing demand that teachers be graduates, the Placement Office in future will enroll only teachers who have already received their degrees.